cultural sector keeping in view the benchmark of 18 per cent to be achieved by March, 1990.

**Scholarships/Financial Assistance given to Students in Assam by the Tea Board**

1046. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tea Board has given any scholarship/financial assistance to the students in Assam during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the number of students who have been given scholarships for their studies in Engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges and at University level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of students in Assam who have been given scholarships for their studies in Engineering colleges, Medical colleges and at the University level is given below:—

| Year | No. of students |
|---|---|
| 1985-86. . . . . | 38 |
| 1986-87. . . . . | 15 |
| 1987-88 . . . . | 10 |

**Grant of scholarship to the children of the tea garden labourers in Assam**

1047. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special provision has been made to give scholarship to the children of tea garden labourers in Assam; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the Nehru Centenary Year Tea Board has introduced a special scheme of Scholarships for the children of tea plantation workers. Under the scheme Assam has been allotted 16 scholarships for the students, who have passed Madhyamik or equivalent and 13 for those who have passed higher secondary or equivalent for higher studies.

**Plans to increase non-canalised exports**

1048. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Trading Corporation and the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation have drawn up any plans to increase their non-canalised exports and minimise the foreign exchange outgo; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of Action Plan drawn by STC are as under:—

(1) Provision of financial/marketing and technical assistance to associate exporters.

(2) Setting up of an Export Trade Development Group to develop new items and new markets.

(3) Opening of a Customers Service Centre to provide better services to Indian exporters.